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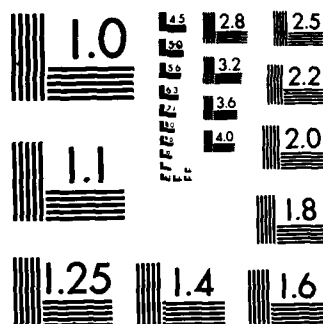
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William Sater

June 1986

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Prepared for

The United States Air Force

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→ This report

To provide an understanding of the current political situation in Chile, this Note reviews events leading up to the 1973 coup that established a military government there. In particular, it discusses the Movimiento de la Izquierda Revolucionaria (MIR), which has become the principal opposition to the current government of Augusto Pinochet. The author reviews MIR's operations, membership, funding, and relations with other political elements in Chilean society. He concludes that a political solution to the troubles in Chile does not presently appear possible since Pinochet will not deal with the relatively moderate political elements in Chile. The situation is polarized and the prospects for terrorist violence are increasing. Keywords:

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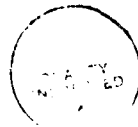
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PREFACE

This Note was prepared under a concept-development project in the Project AIR FORCE National Security Strategies Program, entitled "Terrorism in Latin America." Although the study did not go forward, the Note is being published in the expectation that it will provide useful information for USAF planners and intelligence analysts.

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SUMMARY

Since its emergence in 1973, the *Movimiento de la Izquierda Revolucionaria* (MIR) has become the principal opposition to the current Pinochet government in Chile. During the final months of the Frei administration, in 1970, MIR went underground, but it resurfaced during the presidency of Salvador Allende. At that time, it operated as a political group, although not as part of the Allende government. MIR organized workers and peasants, seizing control of factories and farms and trying to push Allende more to the left. In September 1973, when the Allende government was overthrown by a military junta, most of MIR's cadre either went underground or escaped into foreign exile.

Although under constant and often effective pressure, MIR has since managed to rebuild its forces in Chile. While it does not appear to possess the level of support it had in the early 1970s, it has achieved some popularity, particularly because of its opposition to the junta.

After the 1973 coup, MIR initially concentrated on rebuilding its ties with the working class. Its terrorist activities were limited and aimed primarily at demonstrating that the organization was still alive. In the late 1970s, however, MIR began to attack government installations, assassinating some officials and assaulting others. Despite the government's countermeasures, MIR continued its violent activities.

Although other groups of armed opposition have appeared in Chile, particularly as the country's economy has suffered from the worldwide recession, MIR remains one of the most persistent guerrilla organizations. Because many of its leaders survived the coup, it had more experience than other groups in functioning clandestinely and in the use of violence. Other anti-government organizations--the *Movimiento de Accion Popular* (MAPU), the Communists, and the Socialists--had to build their organizations virtually from scratch. Although MIR is willing to cooperate with non-Marxist groups, it is committed to the use of class war and violence to destroy the Pinochet government and institute a worker-peasant government in Chile.

For over a decade, MIR has waged war against the government, assassinating high-ranking government officials, policemen, and counterinsurgency experts, and assaulting various installations as well as economic targets. Lately, the *Frente Revolucionario Manuel Rodriguez* (FRMR), apparently an arm of the Communist party, has begun to rival MIR as a terrorist group.

A political solution to the troubles in Chile does not presently appear possible. A coalition of eleven political parties has been formed, and working in conjunction with the Roman Catholic Church, it is trying to force Pinochet to either step down from the presidency or promise not to seek reelection. Pinochet will not deal with these relatively moderate elements, however, so the political situation is polarized and the prospects for terrorist violence are increasing.

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I. INTRODUCTION

Chile has had an unusual history for a Latin American country. In the nineteenth century, it forged a functioning central government, in contrast to the prevailing tradition of instability and dictatorship in the region. Beginning in the 1930s, it became the showplace of Latin American democracy, where a multiparty system flourished, the people could vote, and presidents peacefully came to power. In 1973, however, the democratically elected government of Salvador Allende was overthrown and replaced with a military administration.

The 1973 coup was preceded by three years of turmoil. In office since 1970 as a minority president,¹ Allende led a coalition called the *Unidad Popular* (UP), which consisted of the Communist, Socialist, Radical, *Movimiento de Accion Popular* (MAPU), and Christian Left (IC) parties. The two opposition groups, the Christian Democrats (PDC) and the Nationals (PN), together won almost two-thirds of the popular vote, but by Chilean law and precedent, the election was awarded to the candidate who received a plurality of the votes.

Allende instituted a variety of programs over the objections of the majority of the legislature. He seized the large foreign-owned copper companies without paying compensation; he used old decrees to gain control of factories which he ordered to hire unemployed workers; he accelerated the pace of the agrarian reform program initiated by his predecessor and tolerated illegal seizures of property; he established diplomatic relations with Cuba and provided refuge for thousands of leftists and terrorists who had fled their own countries.

Allende's economic programs proved disastrous: Agrarian productivity declined, while the bureaucracy expanded; industrial strife paralyzed the factories because the managers, who were appointed for their political convictions, proved incompetent administrators. Factory output was quickly bought up when the government simultaneously froze

¹Allende obtained only 37 percent of the votes cast in the election.

prices and increased wages, thus accelerating the pace of inflation. When foreign exchange reserves declined because of falling mineral and agricultural exports, and imports rose, the state printed more money to sustain the public's expectations. The combination of an increased money supply and artificially low official prices eventually precipitated a black market in food as well as finished products. By the end of its term, the Allende government was increasing the money supply by 1 percent a day.

The opposition legislators tried to restrain Allende but saw their efforts collapse when the 1973 elections, which the government may have manipulated, failed to give them the necessary two-thirds majority needed to impeach the president.² It became clear that the political opposition had to either passively accept three more years of economic and political chaos or rebel.

When the political crisis deepened, Allende appointed some of the supposedly apolitical military to ministerial positions. This policy proved unwise. The appointments brought the officer corps into conflict with the civilian population, who denounced them for bolstering a government that was hostile toward the middle class. The president, moreover, proved to be ungrateful: After overcoming each successive crisis, Allende dismissed from his government the military officers who had helped him. Thus the armed forces suffered doubly. They earned abuse for helping an administration that many believed was betraying the middle class--the same class from which the officers came--and they received no gratitude from the executive branch of government.

In August 1973, the constitutional crisis deepened, and the legislature debated impeaching Allende. News spread that a leftist group, the *Movimiento de la Izquierda Revolucionario* (MIR), had tried to foment a mutiny in the Navy in order to seize control of the nation. When Carlos Altamirano, one of Allende's ministers and a leader in the

²"Informe de la Comision Investigadora del Fraude Electoral Designada por la Facultad de Derecho de la Pontifica Universidad de Chile," in *Libro Blanco del Cambio de Gobierno de Chile*, Editorial Lord Cochrane, pp. 220-230. See also Robert Moss, *Chile's Marxist Experiment*, David and Charles Publishers, London, 1975, pp. 179-180; and Paul Sigmund, *Overthrow of Allende and the Politics of Chile*, University of Pittsburgh, 1977.

Socialist party, tacitly admitted the existence of such a plot and even voiced his approval of it, the armed forces reacted. On September 11, 1973, the military overthrew the Allende government.

After the coup, the nation was ruled by a four-man military junta representing all branches of the armed forces plus the national police (the *carabineros*). In 1980, a national plebiscite ratified a very conservative constitution and elected a new president, General Augusto Pinochet, one of the officers who had spearheaded Allende's fall. The highly authoritarian Pinochet government has since banned left-wing political parties and curtailed individual rights, and the traditional opposition parties have failed to create a viable alternative. As a result, MIR has emerged to become the premier anti-government organization. Although MIR is now challenged by other groups on the left, it remains one of Chile's most active resistance organizations.

II. THE MOVEMENT OF THE REVOLUTIONARY LEFT

The leftists in Chile are quite sophisticated, extremely ideological, and also deeply divided. The Anarchists, once the most radical elements in Chile, were displaced by the Communist party in the 1920s. Since the 1930s, the party has echoed Moscow's policies, being among its most loyal supporters.

During the 1960s, MIR made its first appearance. Controlled by its younger members, MIR became perhaps the most radical organization in the nation. Its founders, many of them Trotskyites, considered the rest of Chile's left too tame.

During MIR's formative years, the Christian Democrats, who ruled the nation, allowed the group to operate openly. Although enjoying complete constitutional guarantees such as freedom of speech and assembly, MIR members (many of whom were medical students at the University of Concepcion) insisted on using violence to achieve their goals. Many *miristas* received guerrilla warfare training in Cuba.

In 1969, the organization went underground, undertaking a series of robberies to finance their movement. Those who were arrested argued that they had not stolen for personal gain, and they generally received light sentences. Some, like their leader Miguel Enriquez, escaped punishment by taking refuge on the campus of the University of Concepcion, which, under Chilean law, could not be invaded by the police.

The MIR never became a formal political party. It completely rejected the electoral process, believing that armed struggle and class war were the only effective ways for the working class to obtain power. However, in 1970, the organization urged its members to support Allende's candidacy. Following Allende's triumph, the *miristas* who were in jail or sentenced to internal exile were amnestied. Once again, MIR could operate openly in Chile.

The post-1970 period was MIR's "Golden Age," as the organization took advantage of the Allende government's permissiveness. MIR organized the *Frente de Campesinos Revolucionarios* (FRC) to implement

its own version of agrarian reform. The FRC consisted of the rural labor force, particularly the Indian population, whom the *miristas* regarded as some of Chile's most unjustly treated people because they had been deprived of their ancestral tribal lands. Some MIR members occupied small, privately owned farms, paying no compensation, but instead serving as a rural vanguard, increasing MIR's influence in the countryside. The Allende government, meanwhile, refused to restore the illegally seized land to its rightful owners, fearful of being accused of being too conservative.

The Allende government had begun to nationalize certain sectors of Chilean industry. To accelerate the process, in 1970 it invoked a 1932 decree authorizing the government to take control of any factory that was being improperly utilized or whose production declined. MIR also decided to use this law to achieve its own ends: It would foment labor troubles to give the government a reason for intervening. Once the state controlled a factory, MIR would organize the workers. In addition, MIR seized vacant property on which it erected housing for the urban poor. These shanty towns became enclaves of *mirista* support and literally operated under MIR control. In addition, MIR created *cordones industriales* (industrial belts)--factories and neighborhoods strategically located to cut off the nation's large cities from outside support in the event of a revolution.

Although the government had specifically ordered the *carabineros* (national police) not to harass MIR, the *miristas* went underground in 1972. At the same time, they tried to infiltrate the armed forces, including the counterinsurgency "Black Berets."¹ Apparently, these links have served them well, because when the 1973 coup took place,

¹*Ercilla*, 25-31 August, 1971, pp. 9-11; 1-7 September, 1971, p. 18; 15-21 August, 1973, p. 10; 5-11 September, 1973, p. 12; 10-16 September, 1973, p. 14; Moss, op. cit., p. 100. MIR admitted infiltrating what it described as "counterrevolutionary" groups, claiming that it could thus provide the Allende government with information leading to the arrest of those implicated in an earlier, abortive political kidnapping. It also openly stated that it must "formulate a policy towards the lower rank officers (sic) and the troops of the Armed Forces." ("MIR: The Underground Surfaces," in *New Chile*, NACLA, 1973, pp. 31-32.) See also Ian Roxbrough et al., *Chile: The State and the Revolution*, Holmes and Meier, New York, 1977, p. 202-203.

MIR's leadership and many of its members escaped either into hiding or to foreign embassies from which they were subsequently permitted to leave with safe conduct passes from the Pinochet government. Those who occupied collective farms, the *cordones industriales*, and the urban settlements did not fare as well, but were instead quickly subdued by the authorities.

Since 1973, MIR has been in the process of rebuilding itself. Many of the self-exiled members have clandestinely returned to reform the organization; a new rank and file has emerged to engage in resistance activities. The new MIR, however, has altered its tactics. It has begun to dynamite power lines--perhaps indicating that it has adopted techniques employed by other Latin American terrorist groups. MIR has also become more violent, assassinating police officers as well as important political and military figures.

MIR's ideology is rooted in Marxist-Leninist thought. Its leaders also borrow from other revolutionary thinkers, including Debray, Castro, Guevara, and Marighella, whose views they circulate in the MIR journal, *Punto Final*. The Chilean terrorists, however, do deviate from standard Marxist thought in their belief that the revolutionary process can be accelerated. MIR believes that the working class does not have to forge an alliance with the bourgeoisie to overthrow the upper class, but can seize power directly, simultaneously waging a war against both the middle and upper classes.

The 1973 coup forced MIR to reformulate its strategy. The first phase of the new strategy was the rebuilding of a revolutionary organization and the recruiting of new members, particularly from the working class. While clandestinely forming its cadres, the MIR would also capitalize on existing legitimate organizations, including religious and social groups, to improve the lives of the nation's poor who have suffered greatly under Pinochet's economic policies.

The second phase is to be an "armed propaganda" campaign consisting of actions that will demonstrate the junta's vulnerabilities and MIR's viability. These actions are to include sabotage, the assassination of individuals associated with repressive organizations, and "expropriations" from capitalist institutions such as banks and supermarkets.

In the third stage, MIR hopes to forge a coalition with the left and with "progressive" forces in the Christian Democratic party. This coalition could also include other elements that oppose the junta and support "democratic methods." The creation of a common front does not imply that MIR has become enamored of the bourgeoisie, however. Cooperation with the traditional parties is regarded only as a means of overthrowing the existing dictatorship.

Recognizing the military weakness of its forces, MIR does not plan to confront the government's security forces. "Sharpening the contradictions" by provoking bloody government reprisals, they believe, would only hurt their supporters. (Moreover, they plausibly argue that the Moneda's economic, political, and social policies are already accomplishing this goal.) Instead, the *miristas* plan to use "armed propaganda" and resistance to show the vulnerability of the junta's military machine and thus inspire confidence in the masses, who will create a "people's army." In the meantime, MIR believes the crisis of world capitalism will deepen, aggravated by the junta's economic policies. As Chilean society suffers from economic deprivation, the program of armed propaganda will gain momentum, eventually maturing into a revolution.

The junta could conceivably fall under the weight of its own economic ineptitude. Or an external event could overthrow Pinochet just as the Falkland Islands invasion led to the collapse of Galtieri. However, one senses that the terrorists do not want economic pressures to topple Pinochet; they seem to want armed confrontation to destroy the government. MIR has an almost mystical faith in the concept of a "people's war," even though the *miristas* have seen well-organized guerrilla groups fail in other countries, e.g., the Montoneros in Argentina and the Tupamaros in Uruguay.

Although the *miristas* remain committed to the need for armed struggle, they are extremely vague as to how they will accomplish their goal. MIR leaders say that there are numerous choices and "the revolutionary party cannot bind itself to any of the alternatives." On the contrary, "it will be history itself, the concrete reality of the

class struggle, that will show revolutionaries which path to follow."² Apparently, MIR is certain only that "history is on its side," that the struggle will be long, and that, on the basis of past historical experience and the nature of Chilean society, the "people's war" will originate in the cities, not in the rural areas.³

Perhaps MIR is deliberately vague because it recognizes that it does not have the strength to act on its impulses. It is still a small group, and it lacks the support of larger, more traditional political organizations such as the Communist party or the Socialist party. It thrives in an atmosphere of uncertainty; it can triumph only if the entire society is convulsed. Thus, MIR may remain wedded to a program of violence because it recognizes that in no other way can it come to power.

While MIR remains committed to creating revolution, it is not willing to close off any options. For example, the group claims it is ready to form a broad-based alliance with "progressive" elements to overthrow the junta. Once this coalition has accomplished this purpose, it will create a Constituent Assembly. Then, each of the victorious elements will compete for seats in the Revolutionary Congress that will oversee the writing of a new constitution and the formation of a new republic. If the Pinochet government collapsed of its own weight, the structure of the state would remain fundamentally intact. Consequently, a second struggle would inevitably erupt, this time between the bourgeoisie and MIR. If MIR singlehandedly brought down the junta, it might bypass the Constituent Assembly and immediately impose a Socialist government in Chile.⁴

MIR clearly distrusts reformism, arguing that attempts to impose reforms destroyed the UP government. Allende, it claims, fatally erred when he did not invest the means of production completely in the hands of the working class and the people. By retreating from radical change and by moving against anti-golpista forces (i.e., those opposing military intervention) in the armed forces, he divided the left and

²*Chile: The MIR and the Tasks of the Resistance*, 1976, p. 118 (hereafter cited as *Chile*); *Resistance Courier*, Vol. 1, pp. 72-73 (hereafter cited as RC).

³RC, Vol. 1, November 1975, pp. 67-68, 77; *Chile*, pp. 79, 82, 86-87, 89, 95-96, 106-107.

⁴*Chile*, pp. 90-92, 117-119.

allowed the elites to triumph. MIR promises not to repeat the mistakes of Allende: No compromise with the bourgeoisie will be permitted; only the working class and the people will rule post-Pinochet Chile.⁸

OPERATIONS

The first phase of MIR operations began in 1974. At first, the group appeared content to demonstrate its existence by painting slogans on walls and distributing pamphlets. Soon, however, it turned to robbing banks to finance its activities. During MIR's period of rebuilding, government authorities successfully pursued the newly formed groups and succeeded in killing some of their leaders, including Miguel Enriquez, Dagoberto Perez, Nelson Gutierrez, and Augusto Carmona.

In the late 1970s, MIR changed its tactics and began bombing the homes of government officials and sympathizers. Consistent with this new strategy, the *miristas* assassinated Lieutenant Colonel Roger Vergara, director of the Army Intelligence School, and attempted to murder a *carabinero* officer, as well as a justice of the Chilean Supreme Court. They also attacked the headquarters of the *Centro Nacional de Informacion* (the secret police, formerly known as *DINA*). Since that time, MIR has exploded a number of bombs at the homes of government officials and has destroyed energy grids, inflicting substantial material damage while demonstrating the government's inability to eradicate the movement.

MIR does not indulge in random terrorist attacks, but selects its targets with precision. The leadership apparently does not wish to endanger innocent lives unnecessarily, although *miristas* have wounded or killed guards and bystanders during bank robberies. Until recently, MIR concentrated its energies on attacking the military government and its representatives; foreign nationals were not assaulted, assassinated, or kidnapped. Foreign-owned corporations, such as Renault, however, have suffered some damage. (In the late 1960s, various U S. government institutions, like the Chile-North American Society were bombed, although these attacks were never proven to be the work of MIR.) Recently, however, MIR has begun to attack American-owned corporations and

⁸RC, Vol. 1, May, 1976, pp. 15-20.

organizations. These targets may have been selected because they represent the banks that are demanding repayment of the enormous loans the nation contracted during the boom years of the mid-1970s.

The demands of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) for austerity may be exacerbating Chile's severe economic dislocation. Assaulting foreign-owned concerns thus accomplishes two goals: It increases MIR's nationalist image, and it seems to be attacking those who exploit Chile economically. In addition, since other terrorist groups have assaulted American and foreign corporations, the *miristas* might feel compelled to adopt such policies to demonstrate their commitment to the movement. Regardless of the rationale behind them, MIR's recent actions may indicate a fundamental change in the organization's policies. If this is true, foreign executives, and perhaps diplomats, may have to be more cautious in the future.

Traditionally, MIR has operated in an urban environment. In 1973-74, it attempted to create a rural guerrilla base in the south of Chile, but government security forces forced the guerrillas to flee to Argentina. Most of the survivors joined the *Ejército Revolucionario del Pueblo* (ERP) and were eventually destroyed by the Argentine army. In 1982, the *miristas* created another base in the south, which they planned to use to attack military units stationed in the Valdivia-Temuco area. Government forces, however, destroyed this camp as well, capturing or killing most of its members. MIR may henceforth confine its activities to cities, where it attracts less attention and where the population appears to be more supportive.

Although it maintains close ties with other international terrorist organizations and belongs to the *Junta Coordinaria Revolucionaria* (JCR), an organization composed of revolutionary groups from Argentina, Chile, Bolivia, and Uruguay, MIR has not operated outside of Chile. Individual MIR members have traveled to Argentina, but only to convert stolen funds into dollars, which were then used to buy local currency on the black market at very inflated exchange rates. Foreigners, however, including a Frenchman, a Swede, a Spanish Jesuit, and a Brazilian, have participated in MIR's military operations in Chile.

Violence increased steadily during 1983, as MIR began to assassinate policemen and attack electrical grids. Entering the country clandestinely and operating with false identity papers, members of MIR assassinated the Intendent of Santiago, General Carol Urzua, in August 1983.

MEMBERSHIP

The MIR membership consists largely of well-educated, urban people raised in comfortable, if not affluent, circumstances. Few of the members of the original National Secretariat remain at large: Luciano Cruz died under mysterious circumstances (an alleged suicide) prior to 1973; Miguel Enriquez was killed in a shootout with the military in 1974; Bautista van Schouwen died while in the custody of the armed forces. Argentine police arrested Edgardo Enriquez, whom they deported to Chile. Humberto Sotomayor apparently left the movement, leaving Andres Pascal Allende to become its most powerful leader. Many of the secondary leadership, including Dagoberto Perez and Augusto Carmona, have also perished. The government has released various *miristas* from custody, with the stipulation that they live abroad.

Despite these setbacks, MIR does not seem to suffer from a shortage of members. The group's ability to attract recruits may be due to the fact that for many years MIR was the sole organization active against the military government. It is unlikely that MIR will disappear, even with the appearance of new groups. On the contrary, in view of the poor economic conditions in Chile and the repressive attitude of the government, MIR will probably continue to attract members, focusing its recruiting efforts on the worker-peasant population.

FUNDING

While MIR appears to obtain most of its resources by robbing banks and supermarkets, it probably receives additional economic support from a patron state. Indeed, given the number of members, their level of activity, their publications, the extensive propaganda network, and the group's involvement in international organizations, thefts alone could

not sustain MIR. The guerrillas must receive funds elsewhere, although the origin and amounts are unknown. Cuba presumably provides some support, as may the terrorist umbrella organization, the JCR (Revolutionary Coordinating Council). The MIR also possesses links to Palestinian organizations such as the PFLP (Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine), which might receive support from Libya or Algeria.⁶ Other Chilean exile groups also provide some economic assistance. There is no indication that MIR is involved in drug trafficking to obtain funds, as are the guerrillas in Colombia.

MIR's arsenal is not large. Members rely on hand grenades, machineguns, and pistols, some of which may have been stockpiled during and even before the Allende administration. Members also make gasoline bombs and metal devices, called *miguelitos*, which are designed to deflate automobile tires and disrupt traffic. MIR leader Andres Pascal recently claimed that weapons have improved and that MIR now possesses Uzi machineguns and Belgian assault rifles, which it either purchased on the open market or stole from the authorities.

SYMPATHY AND SUPPORT

MIR appears to enjoy substantial support. Andres Pascal recently claimed that the group has 3,000 active members and "thousands" of sympathizers.⁷ MIR maintains ties with various Chilean resistance groups, and MIR members have participated in international conferences in Europe, Latin America, and Asia. MIR also professes solidarity with and presumably has received some support from a variety of other revolutionary groups, including the Popular Movement for the Liberation of Angola, the Mozambique Liberation Front, the Revolutionary Peoples' Army, the National Liberation Movement, the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO), the Sandinistas, the Puerto Rican Socialist party, the Basque separatists, and the American Weather Underground. More important, however, is the tangible assistance provided by Cuba, which since 1973 has provided training facilities, assistance, and presumably

⁶Algeria is known to have given MIR a radio station.

⁷*Latin American Weekly Report*, August 19-25, 1982. Others have estimated the strength of the organization at between 100 and 500.

money and weapons. Nothing would indicate that Havana has changed this policy.

Prominent intellectuals in Latin America, while not expressing admiration for MIR's goals, signed petitions seeking the release of a hospitalized MIR member. These efforts failed, but international pressure has often proved successful in bringing about the release of jailed *miristas*.

RELATIONS WITH OTHER ELEMENTS

The worsening economic climate has antagonized large sections of the Chilean public. Political opposition has become both vociferous and open, and the traditional political parties have banded together to form a coalition and seek the return of democratic government. But the opposition lacks a leader who is capable of uniting the various forces. Differences between the groups have limited their ability to affect the government.

MIR has traditionally remained aloof from bourgeois elements, but the changing economic situation provides a very favorable climate in which to act. Demonstrators have aroused strong counteractions by the government, thereby producing some converts for the *mirista* movement. Also, MIR can rightly claim that it alone has carried the war against the Pinochet administration, that it alone has carried the war of resistance. But by itself, it is not a threat to Pinochet. The *miristas* therefore must combine with a variety of other guerrilla organizations tied to more popular political parties. As the social and economic situation deteriorates, MIR may become more popular; and even if it remains isolated, it will continue to constitute a danger to the military and police and will undoubtedly continue to attack power grids, rob banks, and commit other acts of violence. MIR would probably not cease its terrorist activities even if Pinochet were to fall. It is likely to oppose any government in the pursuit of its goals.

To date, the only factor that has limited MIR's effectiveness is the government's counter guerrilla activity. The administration operates under a quasi state of siege and acts with little regard for civil rights. *Miristas*, once arrested, are tried before military tribunals, which often either deport them or sentence them to jail or internal

exile. The government seems able to capture the *miristas* who infiltrate into Chile; it has unearthed weapons caches and broken up guerrilla camps. But despite these successes, MIR manages to survive.

COMPETITION

Beginning in 1983, MIR discovered that it was no longer the only active terrorist group in Chile. In that year, the *Frente Revolucionario Manuel Rodriguez* (FRMR),^{*} presumably the armed wing of the Communist party (although the party denies this allegation), began its career with an ambitious operation, launching simultaneous bombing raids throughout Chile.

The FRMR differs from MIR in numerous ways: It appears more willing to assassinate lower-ranking members of the military and the police. Like Colombian terrorists, but unlike MIR, the FRMR has used the media to broadcast its messages. More significantly, MIR seems less willing than the FRMR to use violence indiscriminately. The FRMR has, for example, detonated car bombs, which, while supposedly directed against the police or government, nonetheless threatened and took the lives of innocent civilians. MIR has generally avoided jeopardizing the lives of innocents, but as a recent bombing of the Santiago bourse indicates, the FRMR is not so bashful. The FRMR has access to more powerful explosives, which will allow them to become even more dangerous. In another break from the past, the FRMR has kidnapped two industrialists, whom it held for ransom. These incidents may mark the beginning of a wave of kidnappings if, as the press has reported, the FRMR has prepared facilities for holding prisoners in a "people's jail."

The appearance of the FRMR not only threatens MIR's virtual monopoly on violence, it may also force MIR to change its tactics. MIR may have to become more audacious, to indulge in indiscriminate attacks, to escalate the level of violence, to select more prominent domestic and foreign targets for elimination. This will lead to kneecappings, kidnappings, and assassinations, in addition to attacks on power grids.

It is not inconceivable that friction might develop between the FRMR and MIR. Relations between the two groups have always been poor.

^{*}Named for a hero of the war for independence.

In 1970, *miristas* and Communist youths fought in the streets of Concepcion, and several were killed. MIR still considers the Communists too bourgeois, and it may regard them as rivals for possible recruits.

OUTLOOK

Even if a democratic administration should replace the Pinochet regime, there are many grudges to be settled, and the authorities may not be able to satisfy the families of those who have suffered. The removal of the Pinochet regime would probably be followed by a period of political unrest such as occurred after the fall of Chilean dictator Carlos Ibanez del Campo in 1931. (At that time, the nation plunged into a state of chaos that lasted until the election of Arturo Alessandri in 1932.) Clearly, as long as no leader emerges who commands national stature or trust, instability is likely to persist and MIR will take advantage of any situation.

The Chilean public appears willing to not only tolerate but even participate in violent acts of protest against the Pinochet administration. Unemployment--presently at a level of at least 30 percent--remains intolerably high, barely mitigated by a belated public works program; world commodity prices, particularly those of copper (one of Chile's major exports), are depressed. Chile must service a foreign debt of approximately \$18 billion, while its Gross National Product is only \$20 billion. The austerity measures demanded by the IMF and foreign leaders will have the greatest impact on the lower classes, which are already afflicted by high unemployment. The political system, moreover, seems incapable of responding. Perhaps the public is beginning to see the *miristas* as the vanguard of the elements that will depose Pinochet. However, if MIR is to retain its popularity in the face of competition from the FRMR, the *miristas* will have to become even more active--and more violent.

III. CONCLUDING REMARKS

Unrest is increasing in Chile. Public demonstrations are staged against the regime of Augusto Pinochet, particularly on the eleventh of each month (the anniversary of the 1973 coup). The demonstrations often become unruly, especially when the police intervene. In September 1985, violence broke out from Arica in the far north to Punta Arenas in the south; all of Chile is convulsed.

The military feels little urgency to end this situation by negotiating with the civilians. The example of Argentina, where some military officers are under indictment for their participation in that nation's "dirty war," encourages the Chilean military to retain political power. Although some fissures have appeared within the armed forces--one high-ranking Air Force officer recently noted that he would not object to holding discussions with the opposition--no civilian has emerged to assume the burden of establishing order and tackling the nation's severe economic problems. The traditional political parties are extremely fragmented; there are at least 40 separate elements, and none seems capable of filling the emerging vacuum. The old leaders, moreover, are gone. Even the left is in disarray; the once powerful Socialist party is divided into three bands. Indeed, Pinochet has shown that he is extremely adept at taking advantage of the opposition's inability to coalesce. Consequently, a political solution does not appear imminent.

Chile's prospects for the future appear to be quite somber. The economy suffers from declining demand for copper; the government must service an enormous foreign debt; and local industries are decimated. Even if the Pinochet regime were to disappear peacefully, the legacy of hatred that would remain is almost palpable. Like their Argentine counterparts, the Chilean armed forces and police have waged a brutal campaign of repression. As the Argentine example shows, elation over the restoration of democracy can quickly yield to demands for retribution. Knowing what is in store, those involved in Chile's "dirty war" have a vested interest in maintaining the Pinochet government and

resisting compromise. Conversely, those who have suffered from the repression cannot be expected to grant absolution. Labor--repressed, if not exploited, since 1973--will demand restoration of its rights and economic relief. Capital, particularly the national industrialists, will seek protection and compensation. Meanwhile, the fundamental structural problems in Chile will remain: The landless are still without property; the underemployed and the unemployed require assistance. Except for a dislike of the junta and its policies, Chileans have little to unify them. Consequently, once the linchpin of their common frustration, Pinochet, disappears, the conflicting elements in Chile can be expected to turn on each other to press their claims.

Until recently, the terrorist bombings in the country occurred mainly in Santiago. Slowly, however, terrorism has spread throughout the nation. The authorities have discovered *miristas* operating in the south, Temuco, Los Angeles, and Valdivia, as well as in the cities of the Central Valley and the north. The government has responded by unleashing the police or the army, imposing a curfew, limiting the publication of news about terrorism, and convoking military courts to deal with outbreaks of violence. More recently, it decreed a state of siege and used the suspension of constitutional rights to launch raids, entering shanty towns and carrying off thousands of men to jail. These countermeasures have only antagonized elements that were previously neutral. The Archbishop of Santiago, regarded as a conservative, denounced the government's actions. World opinion, traditionally opposed to the Pinochet regime, has become even more vocal in its criticism of the government.

The situation clearly resembles the plight of Chile in 1931, when the country was ruled by a dictator who cloaked his authoritarian rule with the mantle of a dubious election. Then, as now, Chile was undergoing a severe economic crisis. The decline of commodity prices, the destruction of the nation's industrial base, and high interest payments to foreign banks devastated Chile, forcing thousands out of the workforce. Then, as now, the political system, united only by its hatred of the government, seemed incapable of agreeing upon a common course of action. Then, as now, the regime progressively lost the support of the nation's population. First the poor and the left, then

the middle class, and now the Church have deserted the Pinochet administration. These defections have not undermined the government's resolve, however.

The terrorists, including MIR, will continue to harass the administration, murdering its officials and sabotaging its weakened economy. Public dissatisfaction, initially fueled by economic suffering, has turned against the Pinochet regime, and the momentum is on the side of the opposition. Thus, terrorism will not abate. Indeed, judging from the experience of 1931, political unrest can be expected to continue even after Pinochet's fall from power. The nation faces the prospect of increased terrorism and violence.

Although under constant and often effective pressure since 1973, MIR has managed to rebuild its forces in Chile. While it does not appear to possess the support it enjoyed in the early 1970s, it nevertheless has achieved some popularity, particularly because of its opposition to the junta.

After the coup in 1973, MIR concentrated its efforts on rebuilding ties with the working class. Its terrorist activities were limited and were aimed primarily at demonstrating that the organization was still alive. In the late 1970s, however, MIR became more active, attacking government installations and assassinating and assaulting officials. Despite the government's countermeasures, MIR has continued its violent activities.

Although other groups of armed opposition have appeared, particularly as Chile's economy has suffered from the worldwide recession, MIR remains the leading anti-government guerrilla organization. Because many of its leaders survived the coup, it has more experience in functioning clandestinely and in using violence. Other anti-government organizations, such as MAPU, the Communist party, and the Socialist party, have had to build their organizations virtually from scratch. Although MIR is willing to cooperate with non-Marxist groups, it remains committed to class war and violence as the means to destroy the Pinochet government and institute a worker-peasant government in Chile.

For over a decade, MIR has waged war against the government. *Miristas* have assassinated high-ranking government officials, policemen, and counterinsurgency experts. Its members have assaulted military installations as well as economic targets. In addition, the FRMR, apparently an arm of the Communist party, has now emerged to rival MIR as a terrorist group.

A political solution does not appear possible. A coalition of eleven political parties has been formed, and working in conjunction with the Roman Catholic Church, it is trying to force Pinochet to either step down from the presidency or promise not to seek reelection. But Pinochet will not deal with these relatively moderate elements. Consequently, the political situation is polarized, and the prospects for increased terrorist violence can only increase.

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